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GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST, AND ON EARTH PEACE, GOOD WILL TOWARDS MEN."—LUKE 11. 14.

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## ON THE SAFETY OF BEING ORTHODOX.

It is a common thing to see men, who feel safe in orthodoxy and unsafe in heresy, without any reference to the truth or the falsehood of the one or the other. They seem to be impressed with the idea, that to hold to orthodox opinions is the same thing as to have fairness of mind; and that to hold to heretical ones is to have a perverted understanding and an aversion to the truth.

The cause of this is the confident and positive manner, in which orthodoxy claims to be right. "Before all things" says the Athanasian creed, "before all things it is necessary that a man do keep whole and undefiled the holy catholic faith" that is the orthodox faith, "which faith except a man do keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly." This is the beginning and end of that famous creed; and it is the beginning and the end, the Alpha and Omega of orthodoxy itself. It is an assumption of absolute infallibility. This is not indeed claimed by Protestants for the Pope, and perhaps not for the creed of St. Athanasius; but it is claimed for a certain set of opinions. Where then is the wonder that people should feel safe in holding to this faith, when holding to it is made the first condition of their eternal welfare. "Before all things" says the creed, and "before all things" say many of our pulpits "it is necessary that you do keep whole and undefiled the orthodox faith." And is it not true, that many ministers would show more anxiety at one of their hearer's defection from this faith, than at his being found guilty of some base action? Is not the burden of almost every discourse in some pulpits, the enforcing this speculative faith? Where is the wonder then, since the maintaining this faith is thus before all things made necessary to salvation, that persons brought up in it should feel safety in the mere speculative consideration and acknowledgment of its truth? Where is the wonder then, that they should shrink with horror from even the examination of the opposite doctrines, that is, in fact from the examination of their own belief, since the doctrines on one side can hardly be faithfully searched

into without examining those opposed to them.

One consequence of this peculiarity of orthodoxy is a total misapprehension of what religion principally aims at. Should we admit for a moment, which we are very far from doing, the orthodox system of faith to be true, still a mere speculative adherence even to the truth is not before all things necessary. Many other things are vastly more necessary. "Denying ungodliness and every worldly lust and living soberly, righteously and piously," are much more important than the speculative adherence even to a true faith. But our orthodox brethren are very fond of preaching against good works, and extolling faith, by which they mean a belief in the peculiar doctrines of their system. The whole tendency of their instruction to the people too commonly is to fix in their minds as the first great requisite of religion, the importance of certain speculative notions & subtle distinctions which have no practical bearing, or if they have any, one that is not favorable to sound morals, to active exertion, or to rational piety.

Listening to instructions of this misguiding tendency, enforced as they always are, by appeals to the awful sanctions of an eternity of misery? is it strange that men should be led to attach a prodigious value to the system conveyed in these instructions? Is it strange that they should feel that there is merit in believing what they are continually told it is above all things necessary they should believe? Is it a subject of wonder that a belief thus perpetually enforced and reiterated, should swell into a thing of such vast importance, that independent of its truth or falsehood, men should cling to it as to the only ark of safety? And is not this the fact? Do not men, brought up in this system, in some instances when a just review of their lives could afford them no consolation, consider this *submission of their reason to the truth*, as it is called, this blind and inoperative assent to speculative articles of faith, much in the same light as the ignorant Catholic does the consecrated wafer, the water of absolution, and other rites which are to procure the favor or avert the displeasure of

*Strip 4 pages*



Let such imitate God. Does he show resentment; does he inflict the punishment of his neglect and displeasure; does he pour out the vials of his wrath on those especially, who do not agree with them in opinion? Are they scorched by his lightnings, or do his thunders burst on their heads alone? On the contrary, are not all equally the objects of his bounty and blessings, his paternal care and protecting providence? Shall we have the vanity and presumption to think, that we are vindicating the honor of God, by pursuing a course of action directly opposed to all his dealings with men, by violating his commands, and doing injury, where he confers unmeasured favors? If we would promote his glory, let it be our highest concern to obey and imitate him. In regard to our differences with our brethren, in which we all believe ourselves right, let us humbly ask in the language of Paul, "Who maketh us to differ? What have we, that we did not receive?" God is the author of all; him alone are we to serve: him alone are we to please.

Thus have we briefly developed the principal causes of the evils, which the protestant church at large has suffered. The influence of the same causes may be followed into narrower circles, and be found no less destructive of religious truth, harmony, and practice. Churches there are, which profess to unite under one name, and which come together at stated times in the form of a Convocation, Convention, Association, or General Assembly. Each of these has a creed to regulate the faith of the whole body, and every member proffers a solemn declaration, that he will adhere to all its articles. But where is the Convention, or the Assembly, in which there is any thing like a unanimity of belief?

Take the English Church for an example. Have not every shade and gradation of sentiments, many of which are as opposite to each other as light to darkness, been zealously and pertinaciously taught in that church, in defiance of the three creeds and the thirty nine Articles? Take the Presbyterian Church for another example. Is it not a notorious fact, that many in this enclosure are Hopkinsians and Arminians, and that a very small portion believe literally in all the dogmas of the Westminster Divines? No one will deny these facts. And is not the inference just, that imposing a formulary, which thus ensnarers men's souls, is a source of incalculable injury to pure

religion? It leads either to hypocrisy, to violations of a sacred agreement, or to downright excommunication, either of which justly brings a scandal on the christian profession.

The Congregationalists, and perhaps other sects, have another practice. Not content with the confessions, creeds, and platforms, bequeathed to them by their fathers, as pillars of support to the fabric of their faith, separate congregations have taken care doubly to fortify themselves by minor formularies, or covenants, to the fashion of which every member must be conformed. Into these choice symbols you will often find wrought all the mysteries of school divinity, ontology, pneumatology, and metaphysics, to which the most untutored mind in the parish must acknowledge his undoubting assent and consent, before he can be admitted to the privileges of a christian. Here you have the poison of this system extending to the minutest ramifications of society. You may behold its effects in the divisions of churches, lawsuits about church property, quarrels among neighbors, altercations among friends, and irreconcilable alienations supplanting good fellowship and kind feelings.

Let it be observed, however, that the mischief of creed-making does not arise simply from bringing together a set of articles, to which any one is ready to subscribe. Every man's faith is in some sense a creed, and in itself considered there is no more crime in writing it out, than there is in thinking it over in his mind. It is not writing it, nor arranging it into articles, nor endeavoring by fair argument to convince others of its truth, that clothes it with danger, and converts it into an instrument of disorganization and oppression. It would certainly be much better to be guided by Scripture language, and be satisfied with the words of divine wisdom, yet there can be no essential harm in telling the world what we believe in our own way, provided we are disposed to go no farther. But, unfortunately no one is contented to stop here; nor have creeds ever been made for the purpose alone of expressing what their makers believed. They have invariably been designed to operate on the minds of others; they have been thrust forward as tests of a true faith; they have been imposed as conditions of christian fellowship. In this consists their mischief, in their usurpation, their encroachment on right, their assault on conscience, their exclusive, intolerant tendency.



## PLAINNESS OF THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINES.

*(From Whitby's Last Thoughts.)*

Now, from this principle, that a rule prescribed by an all wise God, to teach the most simple, rude, and ignorant, as well as the wise and prudent, what is necessary for them to believe, and do, in order to salvation, must be plain, and easy to be understood, by the most simple and illiterate, it follows,

1st. That it is repugnant to the wisdom of God, to require any thing as necessary to be believed, which is dubious, and obscure in Scripture; since that would be to propound that as a means for obtaining an end, which he knew to be insufficient to obtain it; it being certain, that what is dubious and obscure in Scripture, cannot afford us a certain knowledge of our duty.

2d. It also seems repugnant to the goodness of God, to perplex and confound weak minds with such subtilties, for the knowledge of which he has not given them suitable qualifications. Seeing, as St. Paul observes, "God accepteth, according to what a man hath and not according to that he hath not." 2. Cor. viii. 12. Now it is evident, from the continual clashing of our most learned divines about these subtilties, that the illiterate can have no certain knowledge of the truth or falsehood of them.

3d. It seemeth inconsistent with the justice and righteousness of God, to require any man to believe what he does not, and cannot, understand; for no man can be said to believe, that is, assent to, what he does not understand; because assent is an act of the understanding, and we must understand the meaning of every term in a proposition, before we can assent to it, or dissent from it; for words of which we do not understand the meaning, are the same to us as if they had no signification at all. A righteous God puts upon no man the Egyptian task, "of making brick without straw," nor requires any thing of us in order to our salvation, which we cannot perform; that being in effect to require impossible conditions of salvation from us.

## UNITARIAN VIEWS OF THE DEATH OF CHRIST.

*(From Spark's Inquiry)*

"It is common, nay, if I mistake not, universal with the orthodox, to represent Unitarians as putting no reliance on the death of Christ, making this event of no value in procuring salvation, and not admitting any merit

or efficacy in his sufferings, but depending on their own exertions alone for reconciliation with God. This representation is essentially false. They do not all agree in opinion any more than Trinitarians, yet it may be asserted, as a universal and fundamental principle of their faith, that the death of Christ was in the highest degree important in establishing the Gospel scheme; so important, indeed, that without it his religion could never have been introduced, nor its benefits enjoyed. In regard to the particular effects arising from his death, its efficacy, and the extent of its influence, they have differences of opinion, but none which interferes with the principle above stated; nor in these respects do they differ so much as Trinitarians." Mr. Sparks here introduces a variety of opinions among Unitarians, upon this subject; all of which may be classed under three general heads. "First, that the death of Christ was a sacrifice designed to expiate, or to take away the guilt of sin, by its influence in procuring the pardon of God, which would not have been granted without such a sacrifice. Secondly, that for the sufferings and death of Christ, he has been rewarded by the Father, in an exalted state, with supreme power to forgive sins, to make effectual intercessions for transgressors, and bestow salvation on all such as are truly penitent and worthy.—Thirdly, that his death was chiefly instrumental in leading men to embrace his religion, obey his commands, repent of their wickedness, forsake their sins and attain that holiness of character, which God is always ready to accept and reward with pardon, & without which no man can be fitted for his future kingdom."

## DIVINE MERCY.

THERE is forgiveness, Lord! with thee,  
The humble penitent to cheer;  
That all, who thy rich mercy see,  
May hope and love, as well as fear.

More welcome than the morning's face  
To those who long for breaking day,  
Great God! is that abundant grace,  
Which thy kind promises display.

Our trust is fixed upon thy word,  
Nor shall we trust thy word in vain:  
Let contrite souls address the Lord,  
And find relief from all their pain.

*Exeter Coll.*

## CREEDS THE SOURCE OF INTOLERANCE.

*From Sparks's Inquiry.*

To the passion for established Confessions may be attributed the propensity, so common among christians, of calling harsh names, applying reproachful epithets, and charging their brethren with heresy and unbelief. It is observable, that they who are the most rigidly wedded to forms of faith, have usually been the first to commence the outcry of heresy, and the most relentless in pursuing the unfortunate delinquent. The reason is obvious. While they are guided by human forms, why should they not condemn all persons as infidels, who persist in acknowledging assent to the Bible only? Was any man ever denounced as a heretic for not believing in the Bible? Not one. Martyrs have been tried by creeds, and condemned for denying creeds. They have suffered for the constancy of their faith in the Scriptures. Does not every church employ the term heretic to denote one, who rejects its assumed articles? Does not that which makes a heretic in one church, make a saint in another? Judge every man by the Bible alone, and you will have no further occasion to torture his conscience and blacken his character with the hideous terrors of excommunications, anathemas, and cruel aspersions on the charge of heresy.

I speak not of the original meaning of the word, but of its popular use, or rather abuse. Every person, charged with heresy, professes a firm and sincere belief in the Gospel. Otherwise he would not be a heretic, but an infidel. His accusers call him a heretic, not because he does not believe the Bible, but because he cannot believe it as they do. He is a heretic in the eyes of Calvinists, because perhaps, he does not believe one of the five points; of Arminians, because he believes them all; of Baptists, because he sprinkles infants; of Congregationalists, because he does not sprinkle them; of Presbyterians, because he believes in bishops; of Churchmen, because he does not believe in them. And so we are all heretics to one another, and yet the faith and hopes of all centre in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Is it said, that in accusations of heresy, the accuser always understands the term to indicate a deficiency of faith in the Scriptures? Let this be granted, and the case is not altered. The accused tells you that he *does* believe the Scriptures, and what better authority can be had, than his own declaration?—May we not justly consider the enforcement

of a charge, under such circumstances, as the wickedest persecution? Why is he to be branded with an odious epithet for valuing his faith as dearly as another, who may rashly accuse him of being a heretic, for maintaining his independence and a clear conscience?—Abolish creeds, obey the Scriptures, respect conscience, and no room will be left for churches, or individuals, to denounce their brethren as heretics, or to kindle discord by recrimination and offence.

But oppression and tyranny, contentions and broils, quarrels between churches, enmities between neighbors, coldness between friends, faction in states, tumults in society, tranquility disturbed, peace destroyed, and good faith violated, have not constituted all the bad effects of prescribed forms of belief. They have been the refuge of depravity, the cloak of artifice, the screen of hypocrisy, a veil of darkness, which has concealed many a purpose of blackest die, many a heart of foulest treachery. They have too often produced in the language of Jerom, *Concordia major quam bonorum*, a greater harmony of wicked, than of good men. Who does not respect the garb of piety? Who will suffer the eye of suspicion to rest on the robes of formal sanctity? When a man talks much of his creed, and punctually observes the written forms of his church, does not all the world cry out, his faith is sound, all must be right? Here is the deception. Piety is so rare a grace, that we are apt to connect its essence with forms; and confessions of faith are the most convenient and imposing forms imaginable. They cost nothing; they may be had for the wearings; and they afford an impenetrable covert for every species of fraud and iniquity.

Again the habit of creed making has given rise to a dangerous fallacy respecting the extent of a true christian faith. Many seem to think a system of belief valuable and safe only in proportion to its length. The gradual enlargement of the standard Confessions has encouraged this notion. The most ancient creed, fabulously denominated the Apostles', contains a dozen lines; the Nicene, twice as much; the Athanasian twice, as much more; the Augsburg Confession contains twenty eight chapters; the English, thirty nine articles; the Scotch, thirty three chapters. Thus have points of difference been multiplied. Every age has added something, till finally the more copious the system of faith, the more secure the believer thinks himself.



It is no uncommon thing to find persons, who tremble at the thought of believing too little, but never dream of the peril of believing too much. And yet, which is the most dangerous? What is it to have a correct faith? Is it not to believe the exact truth? Is the hazard less on one side, than on the other?

It seems a matter of confidence and satisfaction to some, that, since they believe all that others believe, and much more, their chance of salvation is proportionably enhanced. What is this *much more*? If it be truth, it is important; but if it be error, it is a pernicious addition. The doctrines of the christian religion are facts; they are to be studied as facts, and understood as such.—They rest on evidence and conviction, and to carry them beyond these, manifests weakness and credulity, rather than a teachable disposition, or a sound mind. When you search for historical facts, are you gratified, that the historian tells you a great deal more than ever happened? When you read a book of science, do you think it an advantage, that the writer has interwoven conjectures of his own with his demonstrations, and the results of his experiments? Why, then, should it be thought safe to adopt a principle in religion, which is the last, that would be admitted in the inquiries of common life, and which affords no means of distinguishing truth from falsehood?

In short, as credulity is a more common failing than distrust, there is a much greater proneness to multiply, than diminish the objects of faith. It is better, says Cicero to think nothing, than to meditate evil. *Nil sentire est melius, quam prava sentire.* We may say the same of belief. It is better to have no faith at all, than to believe what is false. Additions to truth are errors, and from these have chiefly arisen divisions and discords; not from any want of faith in the essential truths of the Gospel, but from a belief, or a pretended belief, in many things not contained there. The only remedy is to go back to the Scriptures, and start with the conviction, that the true christian faith consists in believing just enough and no more.

But one of the worst effects of this system of prescribing faith, and dictating to conscience, has been to encourage pride and a malignant temper. Slight divisions have grown up into a most violent rancor, which has increased in bitterness, till it has ended in a consummation of all that is wicked in the

human heart, *the spirit of intolerance*; that spirit whose breath is a pestilence, whose touch is death, and whose delights are scenes of darkness and iniquity; that spirit which Christ censured in the haughty, persecuting Jews, and which incited these same Jews to demand his death, to mock at his sufferings, and revile him in his dying moments; that spirit which led suffering martyrs to the stake and consigned them to the flames; which darkened, deluded, and tortured the world for ages, kindled the ferocious zeal of bigotry, forged the chains and lighted up the fagots of persecution. Shall we say that this spirit still lives? Does it not live in the hearts of those, who would reproach and disturb others for their opinions, and who are more zealous to shew their regard for the faith, than for the essential virtues of the Christian religion? Does it not live where misrepresentation and abuse usurp the place of christian love and charity, and where hatred and malevolence blot out the kind affections? In some degree it dwells in the breast of every man, who would encroach on the religious liberty of another, and fix a stigma of reproach where he cannot fasten the chains of his creed.

How is it, that the emotions of pity, humanity, and tenderness, voluntarily rise up when we behold our fellow men in trouble, or distress, or under any temporal calamity; but if they are suspected of being so unfortunate as to entertain a false opinion, or to swerve from what we are pleased to call the true faith, they are at once denounced and shunned as dangerous to society; the passions are inflamed; they are treated rudely; they are assaulted with the voice of menace and irritation; the milk of human kindness seems to be dried up from its source; the currents of benevolence and sympathy are frozen in their channels? Not a trace can be detected of that mild, and forbearing, and gentle, and affectionate spirit, which pervades the Gospel, and ought to reside in the breast of every christian.

Why should any persons desire to persecute others, or clamor against them, because they cannot in conscience subscribe to the same articles, nor bring their minds to receive the same opinions as themselves? Is any one injured by what others think? Certainly not. Why then be disturbed? Because, some have said, although we are not injured, God is dishonored, and it is our duty to vindicate his honor, and support the cause of true religion.



God, as a substitute for a life of holy obedience and virtuous endeavour? W.

*from P. 161.*

#### DOCTRINES OF CALVINISM.

THE doctrines of Calvinism lead unavoidably to the inference that God is a most merciless and vindictive being. We do not mean to intimate that Calvinists profess to regard him as such; but how can we escape this inference from doctrines, which teach that, on account of the disobedience of our first parents, God creates all of us their posterity with a sinful nature, by which we are wholly prone to evil, and rendered wholly unable to do any thing to procure our salvation! That this is what Calvinism teaches, we think was fully shewn in our last number, by numerous quotations from the most highly esteemed 'Confessions of Faith,' and from the writings of some of the most eminent defenders of this system. We now invite the attention of our readers to another doctrine of Calvinism from which, if true, the same dreadful conclusion follows, that the being in whom we live and move, at whose disposal we entirely are, is merciless and vindictive. We allude to the doctrine of Atonement.

According to Calvinism, the sin of Adam and Eve brought upon the whole human race the curse of total depravity, and the anger of God so intense that it could not be appeased by any thing his wretched creatures might do. A part of them however 'the elect,' will be pardoned, not on account of their faith or holiness, but because they have been bought off from the execution of God's vengeance by the expiatory sufferings and death of Jesus Christ, who endured the fierceness of his wrath, and the whole weight of his displeasure, by suffering agonies and death in this world, and the sum of all the torments of wicked spirits in Hell.

The Westminster and Saybrook Divines inform us that 'the Lord Jesus by his perfect obedience and sacrifice of himself hath fully satisfied the justice of his Father, and purchased not only reconciliation, but an everlasting inheritance for all those, whom the Father hath given unto him.' Again, 'Christ by his obedience and death did fully discharge the debt of all those that are thus justified, and did make a proper, real, and full satisfaction to his Father's justice in their behalf.' In the Saybrook Platform we read 'The office (of the mediator and sure-

ty) the Lord Jesus Christ did most willingly undertake, which that he might discharge, he was made under the law and did perfectly fulfil it, and underwent the punishment due to us, which we should have born and suffered, being made sin and curse for us, enduring most grievous torments immediately from God in his soul, and most painful sufferings in his body.' Here we come upon that part of the doctrine which, if true, stamps unrelenting cruelty upon the character of the Almighty. According to the same system, Christ was 'the very & eternal God,' therefore the ransom he paid was sufficient for all mankind; yet all mankind are not allowed to partake of the benefits of his sacrifice, but only 'the Elect whom God did from all eternity decree to justify.' Against the rest, though a ransom has been paid that is adequate to their redemption, the anger of God will nevertheless burn forever.

The Westminster Confession every where, and the Saybrook Platform in this State, we presume, are high authority. But we will subjoin a number of extracts from several orthodox writers of celebrity, that our readers may be made better acquainted with the doctrine of satisfaction, or popular doctrine of atonement. In Wright's 'Salvation of sinners by the Free Grace of God,' there is a large collection of passages from the works of distinguished Calvinists, on this subject.—From this we shall take as many as will answer our purpose, with the references given by Wright to the places where they are to be found. The following are from CALVIN'S INSTITUTES, 'In his soul Christ suffered the torments of a damned and forsaken man.' B. 2. C. 16. § 10. 'The burden of damnation from which we were delivered was laid upon Christ.' B. 2. C. 15. § 4. 'There is no other satisfaction by which God being displeased, may be made favorable and appeased.' B. 3. C. 4. § 26. Again he speaks of Christ's bearing the person of a priest; 'to make the Father favorable and merciful unto us'. B. 2. C. 15 § 6.—And of God's 'appeasing himself through the blood of the cross.' 'It was requisite that he should feel the severity of the divine vengeance, in order to appease the wrath of God, and satisfy his justice.' B. 2. C. 16. § 10.

FLAVEL in his 'Fountain of Life' opened has the following passages, 4to edit. p 46. 'To wrath, to the wrath of an infinite God without mixture, to the very torments of hell, was Christ delivered, and that by the

hand upon one s end o recon quate sins tion C sins, justic ed fr of Ch vine j it hac the m sword 'His which the w lay up poure p 15 made in pa lieve Bli Thou of Ch Lord, and fa cance for m fifty n bed a with Chris the fu ly kin BU trine says for th which hell; saint, and d rooms called God's the de its sti resisti fice, d above of sin pressi STC Redec



hand of his own Father.' p 119, 'God stood upon full satisfaction and would not remit one sin without it.' p 132 'The design and end of this oblation was to atone, pacify, and reconcile God by giving him a full and adequate compensation or satisfaction for the sins of his elect.' p 134 'From this oblation Christ made of himself to God for our sins, we infer the inflexible nature of divine justice, which could no other way be diverted from us and appeased, but by the blood of Christ.' p 338 'Here is the triumph of divine justice and the highest triumph that ever it had: to single forth the chief shepherd the man that is God's fellow—and sheath its sword in his breast for satisfaction,' p 419. 'His soul felt the wrath of an angry God, which was terribly impressed upon it.—As the wrath, the pure unmixed wrath of God, lay upon his soul so all the wrath of God was poured upon him, even to the last drop.' p 159 he says, "If Christ, by dying, hath made full satisfaction, then God was no loser in pardoning the greatest of sinners that believe in Jesus."

BISHOP BEVERIDGE in his 'Private Thoughts upon Religion, speaking of the death of Christ, p 44, says: "I may not only say, Lord, be gracious and merciful, but be just and faithful to acquit me from that debt, and cancel that bond which my surety hath paid for me." And in the 'Practice of Piety,' fifty ninth edition p 405, the sinner is described as asking; 'Lord why didst thou pray with such strong crying and tears?' and Christ as replying; 'That I might quench the fury of God's justice, which was so fiercely kindled against thee.'

BUNYAN, in his book called the 'Doctrine of the Law and Grace unfolded' p. 116 says 'The sins for which he suffered called for the torments of hell; the condition in which he died, did call for the torments of hell; for Christ did not die the death of a saint, but the death of a sinner; of a cursed and damned sinner (because he stood in their rooms;) the law to which he was subjected, called for the torments of hell; the nature of God's justice could not abate him any thing, the death which he was to suffer, had not lost its sting; all these being put together, do irresistibly declare unto us, that he as a sacrifice, did suffer the torments of hell.' The above is selected from a number of passages of similar import, and of more offensive expression.

STOCKELL—in his book called 'The Redeemer's Glory unveiled,' says, p. 157,

158 'In a strict and proper sense, the infinite God doth not forgive sin; for it is readily granted by all who are sound in the faith, that Jesus Christ hath given full satisfaction to divine justice for all sin, and hath fully paid the debts of his church. And if Christ has satisfied the justice of God, for all the sins of his people, how, then, can it justly, or with propriety of speech, be said, that God pardoneth our sins and transgressions? Sure I am, that debt can never be forgiven, which is paid.'

Dr. WATTS, in his hymns and poems has the following passages:

'How justice frown'd, and vengeance stood  
To drive me down to endless pain!  
But the great son propos'd his blood,  
And heavenly wrath grew mild again.'

'Rich were the drops of Jesus' blood,  
That calm'd his frowning face,  
That sprinkled o'er the burning throne,  
And turn'd the wrath to grace.'

'Justice was pleas'd to bruise the God,  
And pay its wrongs with heavenly blood.'

'Pardon, and grace and boundless love,  
Streaming along a saviour's blood,  
And life, and joys, and crowns above  
Dear purchas'd by a bleeding God.'

We might continue this selection of passages much farther, but we forbear. Nor will we at present give our reflections upon this subject, as we at first intended, but deferring them to a future opportunity, we leave our readers to indulge their own thoughts, and make their own comments, on what has here been presented to the m.

CALVINISM, says Rev. W. J. Fox, from first to last, seems a daring experiment to ascertain how far it is possible to exclude divine mercy from a religious system. It begins with representing the whole human race so united with the first man, as that one sin of his should subject all to the eternal curse of God. It proceeds to unfold a salvation sufficient for all, but restricted to a part. It tells men that they came into the world the natural enemies of God and goodness, incapable of loving the one or practising the other; and that finally they will be doomed to remediless woe in consequence of an offence committed before they existed, and of an unbelief, from which they could only be rescued by supernatural interposition. And these are called doctrines of grace!



## ON OUR JUDGEMENT OF OTHERS.

Our estimate of the characters of our fellow beings is necessarily imperfect. We think too well of some, and too ill of a great many. Every man is a mixture of good and evil; and as our knowledge of all the parts, which make up the whole of any character, must be partial, we seldom if ever can be supposed to have entirely correct views of those around us. Accidental circumstances may disclose some traits in a brother and conceal others. Our own prejudices and our own interests mislead our judgement.— Besides, the situation, in which Providence has placed a person, may prevent the development to human eyes of all that is good in him, or hide from our view corrupt principles and bad passions that dwell in his heart.

It is therefore highly presumptuous in any fallible mortal to pronounce with confidence, on the character of his fellows. A willingness to think ill of and to condemn others is a sure indication of arrogance, ill nature or spiritual pride. It shows too plainly the want of that humility and self distrust, without which there is little security for our own uprightness and purity in this world of temptation. And no one who is duly sensible of his own sins, will be ready to cry out against his neighbor's. The Publican in the parable was so oppressed by the conviction of his own unworthiness before God, that he did not think of the vices of those who might be as bad or worse than himself. Yet he was approved rather than the haughty Pharisee, who justified himself by a comparison with others.

It would be much safer to think too well than too ill of our brethren. By this we shall do them no injury, and shall ourselves be incited to abound yet more and more in every good word and work. We ought always to be ready to see & applaud whatever appears praiseworthy in another, and not indulge the suspicion that we may be deceived. Our only precaution should be to possess our minds with just ideas of excellence. Contemplation of the sublime character and attention to the plain instructions of Jesus Christ will furnish us with a perfect standard. Taking our heavenly master then as the pattern, we ought to respect and love all who bear any resemblance to him. We may sometimes imagine we see a resemblance, where in fact there is none; but if it be the original that we admire in the fancied image, our affection is not misplaced.

Our Lord has however left us a test, by which in most cases we may discern between the genuine and the counterfeit. "By their fruits ye shall know them." "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me." "This is my commandment that ye love one another, as I have loved you." And the Apostle Paul declares the *fruit of the Spirit* is in all goodness and righteousness and truth."

Fallible as we are, the application to others even of this test should be made in the spirit of meekness and of charity, which rejoiceth not in iniquity. But we may be sure that those are not Christians, who merely profess, but those who do; not those who cry Lord, Lord, but those who obey the commandments of Christ; not those who have faith, but those whose faith bringeth forth the fruits of the Spirit; not those who flame with zeal, but those whose zeal is according to knowledge; not those who readily espy the faults of others and vehemently declaim against the wickedness of the world, but those who themselves do justly, love mercy and walk humbly; not those are Christians, from whose lips is continually issuing the language of denunciation and anathema against others, but those who, deeply sensible of their own unworthiness, are more anxious to remove the beam from their own eye than the mote from their brother's; in fine, not those are Christians, who boast of their goodness, thank God they are not as other men, and bid them stand off as less holy than themselves, but those who in the spirit of the publican, smite their own breasts and cry for mercy.

## ORDINATION AT NEW BEDFORD.

On Wednesday, Dec. 17. Mr. Orville Dewey was ordained Pastor of the First Church and Society in New Bedford.

Introductory prayer by the Rev. Mr. Goodwin of Sandwich; Sermon, Rev. Mr. Tuckerman of Chelsea; Ordaining Prayer, Rev. Mr. Ripley of Waltham; Charge, Rev. Mr. Kendall of Plymouth; Right hand of Fellowship, Rev. Mr. May of Brooklyn; Concluding Prayer, Rev. Mr. Swift of Nantucket.

## NOTICE.

We give notice that the performances at the late Installation in Brooklyn, are now in the press and will soon be published. Those persons who are disposed to subscribe for a copy or copies, may leave their names with Mr. Charles Sabin, John Parish Esq. or the Editor of the Liberal Christian.